

# **JAMES E. HICKEY: A PIONEER AND JUSTICE OF THE PEACE OF CARSON VALLEY**

Interviewee: James E. Hickey

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Interviewer: Mary Ellen Glass

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## **Description**

James E. Hickey has lived nearly all his life in Carson Valley, Nevada, where he was born in the famous hard winter of 1890. He received his education at the Mottsville school, worked on the family ranch, and became active in local business and politics. As justice of the peace in Gardnerville, Mr. Hickey was a famous figure, for many persons found it convenient to be married in the little western Nevada town. In addition, Mr. Hickey spent a great part of his life observing and researching the history of the mills on the Carson River, which served the Comstock area during and after the boom days there.

The memoir recorded by James E. Hickey includes information on his Irish immigrant parents and their early life in Carson Valley; descriptions of the area's little villages; character sketches of local figures; information about local politics and his own activities as justice of the peace; material about the Indians of Carson Valley; and the results of his research on the Carson River mills.



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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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Alicia Barber  
Director, UNOHP  
July 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

James E. Hickey has lived nearly all his life in Carson Valley, Nevada, where he was born in the famous hard winter of 1890. He received his education at the Mottsville school, worked on the family ranch, and became active in local business and politics. As justice of the peace in Gardnerville, Mr. Hickey was a famous figure, for many persons found it convenient to be married in the little western Nevada town.

When invited to participate in the Oral History Project of the University of Nevada Center for North American Studies, Mr. Hickey accepted enthusiastically, remarking that he had spent a great part of his life in observing and researching the history of the mills on the Carson River. These mills served the Comstock area during and after the boom days there. Mr. Hickey was a cooperative and energetic respondent through the four taping sessions held at his home in Gardnerville, Nevada, in August and September, 1965. The memoir recorded by James E. Hickey includes information on his Irish immigrant parents and their early life in

Carson Valley, descriptions of the area's little villages, character sketches of local figures, information about local politics and his own activities as justice of the peace, material about the Indians of Carson Valley, and the results of his research on the Carson River mills.

The Oral History Project of the Center for Western North American Studies attempts to preserve the past and the present for future research by recording the reminiscences of persons who have played important roles in the development of the West. Scripts resulting from the interviews are deposited in the West Collection of the University of Nevada Library. Permission to cite or quote from James E. Hickey's oral history may be obtained from the Center for Western North American Studies.

Mary Ellen Glass  
University of Nevada  
1966



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## EARLY DAYS OF CARSON VALLEY

My parents immigrated into Carson Valley in May of 1887. They brought with them seven children; the oldest was 13 years of age. Only two were born in this country, of which I was the youngest.

My parents sold their ranch and home in Ireland and packed everything that they possessed, even to every frying pan and kettle, thinking that they had to come here and live among the Indians, where they couldn't buy any utensils or anything. They even packed all the feather beds. It was packed in huge boxes; naturally, they were painted green. The ship's hold was big enough to allow them to put the boxes in there, but when they came to New York to come across country, they were too big to go into the boxcars, and they had to repack everything and cut the boxes down.

They came across the country in a straight emigrant train, and in those days, I presume that you'd term them as a lower type cattle car, because the facilities weren't very much. There was no sleeping accommodations or any meal service. Every day, this train would

stop for an hour and a half or two hours and the emigrants would get out and cook up their food for the next day. And that's how they came across the country and landed in Carson City. And then they came and settled on the ranch in Carson Valley.

They settled on what is now known as the Marjorie Springmeyer Ranch. The occasion of their coming to this country was through the efforts of my father's brother, who was superintendent of the Brunswick Mill, and owned the ranch that they settled on. They came here to run the ranch for him. In due time, Father was in possession of it. He paid the ranch off by peddling butter and eggs and chickens and things down through Carson City, Old Empire, and Brunswick, on the Carson River. It was a case of everybody having to work in those days. My sisters and my mother and everybody that was able to work had to do everything on the ranch; milk cows and work in the fields. And the ranch was finally paid off.

All the children started to school at Mottsville, I presume in the fall of 1887.

I was born on January 27, 1890. It was the year of the most severe winter that was ever experienced in the West.

The day of my birth, there was a boy from about two miles away who skated down the river to play with my brothers and sisters. My father sent him back to contact Doctor Eliza Cook to come down to attend my mother. And he went up and notified Dr. Cook. Mr. Hugh Park, who lived near where Dr. Cook had her office, attempted to bring her down to our house with a sleigh with two horses, but the snow was so deep they had to abandon that. Three men then rigged up a sleigh out of old snowshoes, and pulled the doctor down to our place—about three miles—to attend my mother. The three men who pulled the doctor to our house were John McHugh, Hiram Jones, and Jim Brockliss. And, of course, in all cases, regardless of the age of an Irishman, there was always a demijohn of whiskey filled in the house. My father had seen the men struggling and breaking through the snow and he sent out and met them. Dr. Cook was very much against liquor, but as one of the old men who had a voice like the “Arkansas traveler,” said, “My God, Dr. Cook was mad, but we didn’t give a damn!” So she attended my mother, and then they had to repeat the trip and pull her back up to her home and office.

I started school in September of 1896. My first teacher was Miss Josephine Kenny, who was later Mrs. Wallam of Alpine County. In those days there was no such thing as “grades” in the school here. It went with readers: the primer, the first, second, third, and fourth reader. If you were capable of getting up to the fourth reader, that was, I believe, considered about the eighth grade of today. But I wasn’t fortunate enough to get beyond the third reader.

At that time, there was no high schools or any here in Douglas County. There was many rural schools.

At one time, there was 75 pupils going to the Mottsville School and there was two teachers for them. The schoolhouse there now stands at the same location as it did in the very early ‘90’s. It was from another location and it had two teachers up until, I believe, around 1900. There’s several people here in Carson Valley—teaching and living in this valley—that taught in Mottsville. Some of the pupils in Mottsville were going to school when they were up to 18 and 20 years of age. Nobody—we were living on the farms—ever got to go to school when they opened and, of course, in the springtime, there was the farm work. They quit anywhere from two weeks to a month before school started, but it seemed like everybody was promoted, whether they deserved it or not, in those days.

The name of the Mottsville School was taken from one of the early settlers—the earliest settler—in the region, by the name of Mott. He took up a great piece of ground around here, which included a great deal of that which the Dangberg Company now owns. He took up too much land, and the government cut it down to what is there in the Mottsville district. The name Mottsville acquired itself. I can recall the old Mott’s house that was by the Mottsville cemetery.

Now, going back to the schools in Douglas County. There was about ten school districts in Douglas County at that time. That included Lake Tahoe, also. And it kept dwindling down; and now, of course, it’s one district.

In the early days of this valley, the equipment on the farms was very little. And everything had to be done the hard way, through hard work. Everybody in each family had to work many, many hours a day, and nobody seemed to care; they accepted it

as routine. I know my father had to. When he made his trips down to Carson City and down the river, he'd leave home at three in the morning, and wouldn't get home again until 11:00 that night. And that happened about twice every week. In those days, it was taken in stride, so that nobody was doing any kicking.

There was a great deal of logging over the entire slopes of the Sierras in this county to Lake Tahoe. They would build chutes to bring the logs down to the lake. The chute consisted of two logs laid side by side, and then the trees were rolled onto them. They'd be pulled down by the horses, or oxen, to the lake. Then they would be put into the lake and tied together, and barges would tow them over to Glenbrook to the mills. From the mills, there was a train that ran from Glenbrook up to Spooners Summit, which was the real summit, not where Spooners is today. Then it was thrown into the ponds and flumed down to Carson City, where the big lumber and wood yard was located in the vicinity where the bowling alley is now in Carson. I can recall when I was a very small boy, six or seven years, my father bringing me through there. And all I can remember of it is huge piles of wood and lumber and all the Chinese workers. Of course, they had the Chinese labor in those days.

There was a tunnel right at the very summit—a railroad tunnel right at the very summit of Spooners. Now the highway runs over it. I went in there a ways many years ago, but the tracks and everything were all gone.

In the early days of the ranch, we ranged our cattle on the land which at that time was owned by the Tahoe Flume and Lumber Company. We had all the range from Kingsbury Grade north to Glenbrook in our cow range. That took in every portion of the county there, including around Zephyr Cove.

Our cattle grazed off all the areas, the feed, all through Zephyr Cove in which there wasn't a building standing. The only structure that showed any signs of being a building must have been an old boarding house that went down with the snow; and it was that way for many years.

In the very early days, the Emigrant Road traveled on the top of the summits through there. My brother once found what they termed the "Bull Corrals" up there. There's remnants of where they camped for quite some time, up high. At that time, there was oxen skulls still there to show where they had been shot for food. On the horns of some of those bleached skulls, was burnt into the horn the place from Missouri, and the date they left on the Overland Trail. He was going to bring some of them home when he had a chance. It was quite a jaunt over there for horseback. Then that fall, the fire went through there and cleaned everything out. What a relic they would be today! There was many relics there that I had seen myself way back when I was a boy, but we just didn't pay attention to anything like that.

Going back to the lake shore part of Lake Tahoe in early-day Douglas County, there was Glenbrook; Hobart, which is now the Rabe property; and Edgewood, which in the early days was known as Friday's Station. The old building is the same today as it was, except with the remodeling, as it was when it was built. They used to cut hay on both of those ranches and bale it and bring it down to the lake to the wharves, and then it was barged from there over to Glenbrook to feed the stock that were kept up at those places in the winter. But the most of them were brought down to the valleys to winter, and were taken back in the early spring.

There's many families who lived on the west side of the valley that a person could

dwell on for a long time in telling of the achievements they've made, not only for themselves, but for the community. I would go up to the little town of Sheridan; it's a little hamlet on the west side of the valley. There was a store, a post office, two bars, a hotel there, and it had a great many characters living around there. It was the meeting place of the entire west side of the valley, not including Genoa.

I might relate some things about Sheridan. On election day they always had in those days, the Democratic jug and the Republican jug; one on each end of town. When there were men whose votes they couldn't control the way they wanted to, they'd get them drunk before they voted, and keep them drunk until after the polls closed. Then the ones that they could control, they got them to vote the first thing in the morning and then let them get drunk. That was the usual procedure there at Sheridan. I was there many times with my dad. He would take me there in the afternoon, when he always went to vote.

In the old time, Genoa was quite a place. There were four stores, four hotels, and six saloons. And there was two dance halls, three butcher shops, three stables, a brewery, and a girls' seminary. Then there was the undertaking shop. There was many characters—some were pretty rough ones in Genoa—and some very, very fine men.

There was another thing that not too many people knew; there was a telegraph office in Genoa. The line ran from Genoa to Bodie. It went from Carson City to Genoa, up to the west side of the valley, and cut across Diamond Valley and Young's Crossing, and came out at Devil's Spring, and from there up to Bodie.

The first route through Genoa from Placerville to Carson City and Virginia City—many people think it was Kingsbury Grade—

was through Luther Pass. Then they made a survey and found that Kingsbury Grade would be 13 miles shorter to Echo Summit than Luther. And that's how the Kingsbury Grade was arrived at.

When the Kingsbury Grade came into being, there was a toll gate at the foot of Kingsbury Grade. There was also a grist mill; this ran by the water power from Kingsbury Creek. I can recall the building standing there, but not in operation. Then the cloudburst in 1908 destroyed it and changed the entire road on the foot of the grade.

The old log cabin in Genoa, which I can recall very vividly, had a great history that is not very well known. It was first built, naturally, by the Mormons. It had a great many "firsts" in that settlement; it was the first town when Nevada was a territory and it had the first post office, first district court, first school district. The old log cabin in its day, as it went along, was a restaurant at one time run by a Negro; it was a chicken house; and it wound up at the time of the fire that somebody had some pigs there. That's history.

The Raycraft family came into Genoa around, I think, in 1864. It was quite a family; there was eight boys and three girls. They were all raised there. The first name of the hotel—they refer to it as the Raycraft hotel—was the Exchange Hotel. Now that was known all over the world; it was one of the finest places to eat there was. All the traveling men made it a point to stay over in Genoa, just to enjoy their meals at the Raycraft Hotel.

They had a livery stable there, also, in connection with the hotel. And they would give midnight suppers with big dances all the time. And it was really banquets that they set up in that place; it was terrific. In the fall of the year, they would make mincemeat, and they would have it in a great, huge barrels right there in the kitchen. They made so much



mincemeat pie in those days, and they'd make the mincemeat in those barrels and they'd have it right there, so they wouldn't have to go too far to get it.

They used things in huge quantities; that's how they handled everything. They raised their own vegetables and all the fruits there was, and their orchards were just gorgeous, even in my younger days in Genoa.

We made our own fun; we were never in very much trouble because we didn't have anything to get into trouble. We stayed on the ranches all during the week, and then, on Sunday, we'd have time off. In the summertime we'd take turns going to the other kids' houses and doing something. On the west side of the valley, we'd go out in the mountains, climbing up the hills and do something; down at our place, we'd go swimming, and that kind of stuff. In the wintertime, it'd be skating or else coasting up on the hills. There was no such thing as skis, in those days. We had snowshoes. We'd have these little sleds, and we'd go up on the side hill and slide down as far as we could, then have to climb back up. Otherwise, there was no night activity whatever, because on the ranch you always had your certain work to do, and it was done.

The ranching in the early days of Carson Valley, as I can recall and as has been handed down to me by the older people, was mostly on the west side of the valley. In due time, the ranches through the Minden and Gardnerville area which were nothing but sagebrush, were taken up and cleared, and their ditches for irrigation were put into effect.

The most notable of the ranchers at one time were what was known as the three Dutch Freds. That's Fred Dangberg, Sr.; Fred Frevert; and old Fred Dressler. They were the big landholders and they were instrumental in bringing other ranchers in the valley and setting them up on ranches. Their main

products was hay, grain, dairying, and cattle for market.

Their forms of ranching in those days were, you might say, primitive in that there was no machinery except horse-drawn equipment. It was very crude, and it took a great deal of hand labor to put in the crops, harvest them, and get them ready for market.

The hay-hands, or the farmers, who were hired by the three Freds, were given a dollar a day and board; and they worked ten hours a day. Their products, such as hay, grain, and dairy products, were sold in Carson City, Virginia City, and Lake Tahoe. A great many of the farmers also peddled their butter and eggs and poultry at Carson City, Old Empire, and down the Brunswick Canyon—the Carson River—from house to house. That is the way my father paid the indebtedness off on the ranch where I was born and raised.

There was no railroad into Carson Valley and they had to drive the fattened cattle from this valley down to Carson City to the spur of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad. They had the loading corrals just south of the city limits of Carson City and they had to drive those cattle down there in one day. They trailed about 22 miles. It depended on where the ranch was; some drove them almost 30 miles to Carson. Then the animals were weighed. Many times those ranchers sold their cattle for two cents a pound. I know what my father sold them for—his top price in that time was about three cents a pound. All the pay to the farmers was in gold; there was no such thing as banks around here.

Then, there were, of course, the local butcher shops that consumed some of the cattle here in the valley, but not to any great extent. Many people had their own cured meat, so they didn't have to patronize the butcher shop very often. In the freezing weather, people could keep their own fresh meat, but there

was so such thing as refrigeration, except the natural refrigeration in the wintertime.

They had their own products at home which they kept in frost-proof cellars for winter use, such as potatoes, apples, cabbage, rutabagas, beets and carrots. And that, of course, lasted for the entire winter. For other supplies such as flour, the farmers would take the wheat to the mill to have it ground, and then bring the flour home. They done that once a year in the fall. They'd hold the flour from the fall, and it would never be used until possibly the next May or June. That flour aged and bleached itself naturally, not like it does today through our modern processes.

In milling, if they took the mill a ton of wheat, they'd get the flour a ton of wheat would produce; or if it were two tons, it would be the same. Then they would get the balance of the products of the wheat, such as what they call the "middlings" (that is more or less like the graham flour is today). And the bran, they brought home and fed to the stock. If you'll notice, today all those things such as bran are sold as cereal. Nothing goes to waste on them.

The first flour mill in the valley, at the foot of Kingsbury Grade was known as the Falcke grist mill. Falcke, whose descendants now reside in Genoa, was the miller there. Then there was another mill up at the south end of the valley; it was put up by a man named Fete Heitman; he was one of the early-day men here. He operated that for many years and then it was sold to different ones and moved to Gardnerville. It was known then as the Douglas County Milling Company. The building still stands on the main street of Carson Valley. In due time, it was handed from one to the other and then it had to close because other big outfits were furnishing flour and the Heitman mill couldn't compete

with prices. There was one mill that started in Genoa; it was located on property which in now the Graham Hollister ranch, and it was operated by water power. That was in operation only a few years.

Dairying in the valley was one of the big issues. Some of the farmers here, like the Fred Dressler outfit, had their ranges up in Alpine County. They took their dairies up there in the summertime, and made the butter from the milk of the cattle there and they held it in big barrels there, preserved it with salt over the top of it. Then, in the fall they would bring that down and sell it in Carson City and Virginia City and all the places there. It was all what they called bulk butter and it was sold out by the pound, depending on what the people wanted.

I know of one ranch in this valley, on the west side of the valley, that was taken up. It had a lot of meadow land on it, and it had never been cultivated. Mr. D. B. Park at one time owned the ranch—Hickey ranch—where I was born and raised. He also bought the Cary place and he cultivated that meadow land with oxen and put wheat in it, and he had an enormous crop. He sold the wheat in Virginia City at \$100 a ton.

The first creamery started here in the crossroads at old Waterloo. I cannot recall the time it was in operation, but it was a building there. Afterwards, there was a store in the place and another creamery went up about a mile away from there—what they called Douglas County Creamery Company. It was on the Henningsen property. That was in operation for a good many years. Then, the Minden Creamery was organized, and it took away the business, and the other creamery had to close their doors. It was through unfair competition, as far as that's concerned. Fred Dangberg started that to have everything in

Minden, and then the other ones had to close down; it just went in a cycle that way. The creamery in Minden now has been closed for several years.

There was no lumbering in this valley to speak of outside of the cord wood. There was a couple of small sawmills across the valley that were not very large, and that lasted only a few years. There was considerable in Alpine County but of course, they faded out in a few short years, too.

The irrigation in this valley was originally through the natural flow of the Carson River. They never organized any ditch company, or anything, but they went and they filed their water rights as to priorities with the government; and that's how they established water rights in this valley. There was a few canals put in, but they were individual canals. In due time, the reservoirs in Alpine County were taken up by people in the valley here and they were enlarged, but it was individual enterprises.

The water rights that were established way back still are in existence, and in the summertime and in a dry season they usually had their fights over water in the summertime. They weren't really much to speak of. They were just a farmer trying to make the waterman give him more water and the other fellow saying, "It belongs to me." There's nobody in this valley who has ever really suffered for water. There has never been a failure in Carson Valley in my time or before that I ever heard, because there was always sufficient water to mature the grain—the first crop and usually the second crop. In wetter years, they could get a third crop.

There was considerable mining in the early days in the Pinenut Range, but none of it was very extensive. One property up there was taken up by the Raycraft brothers in the early

days. That placer claim was later acquired by a person named Slater who had various companies up there, spending considerable money, but it really never panned out.

There was other mining up in the valley or in Pinenut that a great deal of money was spent on, but none was a natural producer. There was some miners known as "chloriders" that would take a little piece of property and they would cull a trace of gold and they'd hit a gold pocket. They were able to take out almost pure gold. Personally, I can recall one that was taken out by the Raycraft brothers. I saw it myself. They just had a powder box full of the ore. It was shipped to the mint in San Francisco, and they got returns of \$2500 for it. Otherwise, the mining in the Pinenut district was not very extensive.

The first stores in the Gardnerville area, to my recollection, were the Harrises and A. Jensen. The most successful of the stores was the A. Jensen Company, which is now the Carson Valley Mercantile Company. Mr. Jensen came into this valley from Trinity County, California. He was up there as a farmer when he came in and he started a store. He was also a very famous trader in San Francisco. He accumulated money so he could go to San Francisco.

These stories were told to me by Mr. Jensen, himself. He would go to San Francisco and watch the shipments there, and when they would ship a shipload of sugar into San Francisco and the shipper couldn't find any customers to buy it, he would go in and buy the entire shipload for the freight. Then he would take that and warehouse it, and sell it out in big lots to merchants all over the country.

In that way, he made himself a great deal of money. He was then in a position to deal not only in sugar, but he would also deal

in burlap grain bags. He was very successful in his ventures.

Jensen settled in Gardnerville and started the A. Jensen Company, and then organized the first bank in this valley; the Douglas County Farmers' Bank. He also got into the sheep business and in an extensive way. They had many sheep and went along for years. Then during the crash—what year I cannot recall—he had bought a great deal of wool and shipped it to Boston. He was expecting to get 65¢ a pound. But the crash came while the shipment was between here and Boston, and he was sold out for 15¢ a pound. That crash ruined Mr. Jensen. One son carried on the sheep business, but that went the way of the rest of them. Then the family dwindled down, so there's none of the old Jensens living now.

The Dangberg Company and Fred Dangberg, Jr., in 1905, started the town of Minden. I can recall the entire section of land when there wasn't a building on the place except a grainery that was used by the Dangberg Company. There was also a bicycle track at Minden, located somewhere around where the Minden Inn now stands. Then they laid out the town of Minden. It kept building up, and the Dangbergs built a lot of homes there. They built the first bank in Minden, which is now the post office. Then they put in the water company, and later were very instrumental in building the Minden Inn and the present bank building.

There were some interesting attitudes in Gardnerville when they put up another town just a mile away. The start of the thing was a feud between the Germans and Danish people. Fred Dangberg was in that, and him and Mr. Jensen didn't see eye to eye on anything. Jensen was a big man in Gardnerville, and Dangberg started Minden and that's why Minden got started. They've

done a very commendable job in building that.

Then when the railroad came in, the Dangberg Company practically gave them the right-of-way from Carson to Minden and with a proviso in the agreement. In those days they contemplated extending the line out south into Smith Valley or someplace, but the Dangbergs in the agreement with the V & T gave them the right-of-way free of charge, with the proviso that if they ever went south, they had to go out from Minden a couple of miles and then turn right, so they'd bypass Gardnerville.

Well, the dignitaries of Gardnerville, especially Arendt Jensen, started a little railroad of their own. They got the rights-of-way and everything, and started to organize this company. They started to grade the railroad—it was a spur track from Gardnerville to Minden—and they just about got started grading and then Dangberg arranged it so they was through with the process. There's a portion of their grading still in existence right down about a block and a half from my home. That stopped the railroad from Gardnerville to Minden.

There was some bad feeling about that railroad. Considerable, you know, between the factions. They were always discriminating against each other in business, although it wasn't to such an extent that anybody was injured by it. The community wasn't injured by it at all. All the freight to Gardnerville was hauled by a train to Minden, and from Minden to Gardnerville by drays and distributed. Then, the hotels in Gardnerville the Ritchford, the Rahbeck, and the East Fork hotels all had busses and they would meet the trains. As the train would come in, the driver would holler for the hotel where he was going, and people would go there.

The Ritchford Hotel was the more notable hotel in the valley; it was famous all over the world because the traveling man, or as we termed them, “drummers,” in those days would always come in. It wasn’t as it exists today. The drummers would come in, and they would have huge trunks of samples, especially dry goods and apparel. And they would take two, three, or four days exhibiting their samples. They’d always want to come in and stay two or three days to stop at the Ritchford Hotel because it was such a famous place to eat.

Old Mrs. Ritchford was the most particular person. They used to say that if she’d find a fly in the house, she’d run everybody out ’til she got the fly. I remember her very well. Oh, the meals they used to put up there was terrific! For instance, there was big pitchers of milk on the table, big pitchers of cream and fruits of different kinds, and jellies. Everything was on there for anybody’s health. Then there was a menu, but it was never written down, they just spoke the menu to the customers. And my goodness, she was very put out if people wouldn’t eat. She was such a person; she was a wonderful person. Mr. Ritchford was the stable man. He always had beautiful horses and took wonderful care of them.

In the fall of the year, there would be other salesman come in here, and they would go to the individual, not to the stores, to sell their wares. And they would sell dried fruits, which was very scarce here. Some years, people would have orchards that would produce pears and plums and apples, but if it was a bad fruit year, they wouldn’t have any. So these men would come in and take orders for dried peaches, pears, prunes, and apples. They also sold coffee; it was always sold in the bean, not ground coffee. You could buy a 15- or 25-50-pound drum. In those days, that’s the way

most people had their coffee, and they would just grind enough coffee in the morning for breakfast. The distribution point of that was the Ritchford livery stable. I recall one time we was over there and this fruit was just in burlap bags, very coarse bags. They were distributing the products there at the Ritchford stable, and the wind was blowing a gale and, naturally, the dried manure was in the air, and that was sifted through everything. But it didn’t make any difference to the farmers; they took it, anyway. I can remember that very well.

In the early days—going back to the turn of the century—there used to be peddlers in the valley. They’d go around peddling some utensils or dry goods. They’d go around with their little old horse and closed wagon to the different farmers and display their wares. The farmers would buy so many yards of this and that. Then the peddler always arranged his schedule so that he could stop at the ranch that would have good food, and stay overnight. Most of them were Jews. We called them the Jew peddlers. I knew several of them by name. I can only remember a couple of names; one was Dinkenspiel and one was Menzinski.

The East Fork Hotel was built and operated by George and Charlie Brown. There was so many men working in the valley then in those days as laborers that they had headquarters for them there. You could get a meal in the place—and it was very good—for 25¢—a whole meal. That’s why the men went there. Then George Brown died, and Charlie Brown took everything over and kept going until the time of his death.

In the early days around the turn of the century, there was a little crossroads hamlet here by the name of Waterloo. And there was two saloons, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, a store, and a dance hall. It was a German-



dominated concern. They would have two celebrations there a year, one in the first part of June known as the Schutzenfest (that means the feast before the harvest) . They would have a queen for the day, and they followed the other traditions of Germany. They would have a target that they would shoot, and the man that made the best score was the king for the day, and he could choose his own queen. The king and queen for the day would lead the Grand March that night. For the Germans from around here, that was the day; they'd go there as early as they could in the morning after their day's work was done, and all they'd do all day long was drink beer. I think there was more beer consumed at the Schutzenfest than there was for the balance of the year. They would dance until the wee small hours of the morning.

After that, they had dances in the small hall. It was just a board structure, with cracks in it. They'd have dances in the wintertime, and cold as could be! Everybody seemed to keep warm dancing. They would have their midnight supper in the hotel and go back and dance until morning.

They had another one in the fall, Erntefest. That, I believe, was what they would term as the feast after the harvest, following the same traditions they used to have in Germany. There was no queen at the Erntefest. Sometimes the "king" would be a young German who couldn't speak English or dance or anything, but they still had to have the king.

The Danes had this Danish society and I kind of think the same organization existed some other places. But they never put on a celebration like the Germans. They put on a big dance once a year, or something like that, but the guests intermingled at the dance. It wasn't solely German and Danes.

They always had a Fourth of July celebration here in the valley. They rotated;

they had them one year in Genoa, one year in Gardnerville, and then, maybe Sheridan would have one in a big grove. The Sheridan ones were nothing but just a huge picnic, but in Gardnerville, they put on quite a parade and different things. They had open-air platforms, it's where they danced, they didn't dance much in buildings in those days. Then they left that platform up, and they used to have their Saturday night socials on it. Then they danced all summer long at those places.

Another big day was the first Carson Valley Day. I can't recall the date, but the Dangbergs were the instigators of that, and it was a notable affair. I think there was a dozen automobiles in the state of Nevada then, but Fred Dangberg had one and somebody else had one here. They had parades with the autos and other events; baseball games, bicycle races, and then the big dance was in Minden on an open-air platform. They held that every year for many years. It was a great success at the start and then, of course, it dwindled down until, finally, they let it go. It was dormant for many years, until, I think about '38, when 20-30 Club revived it. My son was a 20-30, and he was one of them that put it on. It's just been getting better every year.

The 20-30 are the ones that are predominating in it. They do such a commendable job to get everything together; all the barbecue meat, and the way they handle the crowd down there, and feeding them is a ...well, it's just wonderful. Nobody has to stand in line very long, and they feed all the people, and everybody praises the food that they put out.

There was different orchestras around to provide music for the dances. In the early days of Sheridan and Genoa, they used to have a fellow by the name of C. M. Taylor. He was an old fellow, and he used to be engaged in what they called the Taylor Orchestra. There

was no sheet music; it was all “ear music.” They would have Taylor as a violinist; and a big bass violinist, and a little pump organ for the chords; and that’s about the only music they had. Sometimes, they had a banjo with them. Then there was a Morrison Orchestra; Martin Morrison was the leader’s name. I think, for the big Carson Valley Days, they’d have outside orchestra come in.

Sometimes, the bands would play for the dances. I was a member of the Gardnerville Brass Band, way back in 1910 and 1912; and we used to go all around the country playing for dances.

Another thing way back in those days. They’d have carnivals come into town; just to Gardnerville—they didn’t have them any other place. They would set up their tents right in the main street of Gardnerville. That was in the horse-and-buggy days, so they’d have to get around there. From one end of town to the other was nothing but a bunch of tents—all kinds of stuff. They’d be there for a week. The band sponsored it one year for a certain percentage of the take, and we’d play at every tent every night. We used to have the greatest time. And the people just flocked into those things.

In all the celebrations in those days, the people had to come with the horses and buggies, and they couldn’t do any chasing around or traveling. You came, and you stayed to go to dances. They came into the towns, and they put their horses up in the livery barn. Many a time, I was home at sunup, because we went there, and that’s as far as you could go.

I recall that I was on an excursion when there was a carnival in Carson City, and we went to it. That was year of the big Jefferies-Johnson fight in Reno and group of us young kids from around here went to see that fight. That was in 1910. In Reno, the celebrations

of those days were out at Moana Springs. There was a streetcar line running out there. We all went out to Moana Springs and we saw all the celebrities—Jeffries and Corbett, Fitzsimmons, and John L. Sullivan—all of them. I was quite a fight fan in my kid days and I knew all the names and knew them; could recognize them by their pictures.

When we got out there, it was the Fourth of July, and naturally, it was hot. Then, we were told that the streetcars weren’t going to run out there any more that day. Most of us in those days had on patent leather shoes. And we had to walk from Moana Springs to Reno. And, brother! We were all sitting alongside the road with our shoes off every once in a while to give our feet a chance to recover. Then, we walked to the pavilion.

Of course, we didn’t have any money to pay five dollars to go anyway, so went walking around, and we noticed people climbing over the sides. One woman went over the side, and a man with a peg leg went over the side. Well, we decided that if they could do it, we could. So there was about seven or eight of us in this group. It was boarded up quite high, but, there was a big knothole there and we boosted a boy up there with a rope. He took that and he could hook it over and we all got in there. Of course, there was dozens of seats vacant, and we got up there, scattered around. I knew that there’d be somebody come in with tickets, and the usher would take them down. We’d kind of walk down with them and step inside and sit down. The next bunch would come along and do the same thing. I got down to a \$30 seat to see the fight. That’s the only way we could see the Jeffries-Johnson fight. In the late afternoon, they brought us back to Carson on this excursion.

I don’t know how many cars it took, but there must have been around 300 people who went down there in those open cars. There was

no closed cars at all. All in the open. It was very beautiful weather, so the weather didn't bother us at all.

People in those days led a pretty rugged life; they were always, you might say, fighting for an existence both summer and winter. Carson City, way back in those days, was a very prominent place there and there's many things happened there.

I had a sister who passed on years ago, a person that nothing could scare. I recall one time we were coming from Brunswick to the ranch with our team, and we stopped in Carson City at the Meyers store. It wasn't the location where the Meyers store is now; it's a brick building owned by the Pozzis across the way. My sister and I were sitting in the rig there and there was a fellow who drove up there just in front of us. There was a Chinaman in there with him. Apparently, this Chinaman gave the man three dollars to bring him to Genoa and then the fellow wanted to beat the Chinaman out of it and get away from him. They were just within 15 feet of us. And this Chinaman reached in his coat pocket, and pulled out a great big revolver—I never saw anything so big in my life—he was going to shoot this fellow. I was a scared kid and my sister just sat there just like she was made of stone—she wasn't excited at all. The people from the store ran out and made that Chinaman put his gun away and got him out of the rig. The other fellow hit his horse and away he went up the street. She was a character, my sister. Nothing ever got her excited, and she faced anything.

In Carson City in the old days, there was a big Chinatown. They had big department stores and everything. I can remember the China town when it was just about faded out. Most of the labor in the wood business and the railroad was Chinese, because they were

people that would—I guess—exist on a little bowl of rice a day or something like that, and they stayed with themselves. There was just lots of them there and lots of them in every wood camp in the country. They were brought in by the V & T Railroad. The labor was almost 100% Chinese.

One of the notable events that happened here in Carson Valley; I can just recall it. I was about seven years old and there was a murder out here on the Chris Dangberg ranch, now owned by S. Jacobsen. It was known at that time as the Virginia Ranch. An Indian by the name of Joe Pete shot Willie Dangberg. The county seat and jail and everything at that time was in Genoa. Joe Pete was brought to Genoa. He was not tried; he broke out of jail and ran away, and they couldn't find him. The Indians themselves didn't want him in existence, and they caught up with him in Alpine County, and killed him themselves.

Another one was Adam Uber deal. That happened when I was seven years old. It happened down here in the building in Millerville, as it was known at that time. There was a man there by the name of Miller, the father of Archie Miller, who ran a little blacksmith shop there. So they named that little spot Millerville. There was a saloon there run by a man named Hans Anderson. Some of his descendants are still living here. This Adam Uber was supposed to be a pretty tough character. He was in the bar one day, and some say he was being abused by Anderson. Uber pulled a gun, killed Anderson and took off. They finally caught up with him and they brought him to jail in Genoa.

Anderson was a Dane, and the Danes organized a lynching party. There were some of the top county officials who were Danes, and there was also some Germans mixed up in it.



They went over one night when the sheriff wasn't supposed to be there, but he was, I guess for reasons known only to himself. His name was John Brockliss. The lynching party took the keys away from him. It was late in the fall; the ground was all frozen. The men took the keys away from Brockliss and went in and took Uber out of the cell, then they drug him down what is known as Boyd Lane. There was some big cottonwood trees there. I guess the man was dead before they strung him up. After he was hanging, they pumped him full of holes with their guns. I happen to know the name of every man in the lynching party with the exception of about four. I not only know their names, but knew them that were in that deal. The last man in that party has been dead for just a few years. It seems like most of the men that were in that deal—both Germans and Danes—that something dreadful happened to them or their family during their life.

For instance, one of the party was staying on what is called the White ranch now—it was the Lange ranch in those days. They were staying in a little house there. When Mrs. Lange's father heard the rumors that this was going to happen that night, he went out and he told this fellow, "Bill, you stay home tonight." And this fellow told him, "If you don't keep your damn mouth shut, maybe you'll be the next one." Mr. Lange got so scared that he boarded the house, and put all the furniture in front of the doors, and never went to bed all night long. He was afraid something was going to happen to the family. That man left here and went to Lovelock and bought a ranch there. They had these things the horse goes around and pulls to pump water. The youngest of his little daughters got mixed up in the gears of that pump and was ground to death. Another fellow used to work for my

dad in the hayfield over there, and something happened to him too.

The grand jury investigation was on and the District Judge came there and he just murdered the sheriff and the officials there for not protecting the prisoner! It wound up that nothing ever happened about it. Nobody was punished by the law. I think the grand jury didn't indict these people because there was too many of the locals involved; that was the trouble. Another old fellow used to live next door to us; he was one of them. I knew them all, but I don't want those on records.



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## CARSON VALLEY CHARACTERS I HAVE KNOWN

I will refer to some of the characters I know about the early days, and first about Spooners Summit.

I'm quite sure my statements in this regard are true, because I acquired it from a person that knew the family very well and visited them very many times.

Mr. Spooner was a timber cruiser, and he was cruising up through what is now Highway 50, for some people down in central California. He kept coming up to the Spooners section, and the timber was so good that soon he started timbering himself. He acquired a very large organization. He had many hundreds of horses and oxen working in there in the woods and hundreds of men and on what is now Spooner Summit. There was a little town there and they called it Spooner's. There was hotels and cabins for the help, and everything there.

I presume there was also a bar there. Spooner became a very wealthy man, and his daughter and his wife were quite on the toney side. They dressed very elegantly and always had diamonds galore on them. Mr. Spooner

was never known to be out without a frock coat on. Then the lumbering went down, and, of course, he went down with it. He was a very heavy gambler in his life and a drinker, and it finally got to going where in his old age, he had lost everything.

He was in the poorhouse here in Douglas County when I knew him. He was in Genoa until the fire—I forget when it was; it was 'way back in the turn of the century—when the poorhouse burnt down and they had to move to Gardnerville, so Mr. Spooner moved here. Where he passed away, I just don't know. When I knew him, he was just a very old man in the poorhouse; there was no flourish to him in those days. I can remember him walking around the streets in Gardnerville.

On the old Mott ranch, there was a lady living there by the name of Mrs. Taylor, who I can recall when I was a very small boy. The main thing that I can remember about her is that she smoked a clay pipe.

On what was the McCue ranch, there was apparently, in the very early days, a racetrack. It showed signs of it for many years. There was

a Mr. McCue who wanted a man to plow his land there in the springtime, and the plow turned over some metal. He picked it up and looked at it, and shined it up. He brought it to McCue and he was going to bore a hole in it and put it on his bridle. Mr. McCue told him it was a \$50 gold slug; they have eight points on them, you know. Then, it finally fell into the hands of Senator Dressler and what became of it, I don't know. I've seen it, while it was in safekeeping down at the Minden bank.

At one time, the Brockliss family was very prominent in this valley. They actually controlled the politics in Douglas County at one time, they were so strong. They were a very, very celebrated family.

Every little place you came to in those days, they had the characters, because in those days, a man would come into a place and he'd either have to walk out or find a ride somehow or other. A lot of times, they'd just stay there for the balance of their life, and, of course, if they went alone, they were characters. I knew so many of them.!

I'll tell of a fellow by the name of Bill Camp, who also died here in this county in the poor farm. He was a rounder and a drinker, but just a good, lovable, old drunk. At one time, he was a very avid Democrat. Senator Newlands was coming up to Sheridan or making the tour of the valley—Genoa, Sheridan, and Gardnerville—and they always drove what they called a four-in-hand (that's four horses on a big coach). Bill Camp delegated himself to go down to Sheridan and welcome Senator Newlands to Sheridan. I won't mention the names of the three men that did this thing—they're all gone. My own brother was one of them. They found one of those big piano boxes, and they took Bill Camp and they nailed him in the big piano

box. They didn't let him out until Newlands had left Sheridan.

Then we had a character around the valley by the name of Tinker Pete. He would have a little hot kettle to go around with his tools, and he'd go around to every farm and fix up the holes in the pans and everything for the people. He was around this valley for many, many years. where he drifted to, where he died, I don't know.

We had another famous character here—Blind Henry. He was an Indian. He was very talented; he could play a flute or an accordion or a harmonica. He could travel any place in the valley from Genoa to Sheridan to Gardnerville, then around. He just walked usually, but many times he got rides. He was quite a character, and the way he got around without any help was remarkable. Today, he wouldn't get any place.

There was a fellow by the name of Dave DeLong of Genoa; he was a little, short fellow. He had a barbershop, he was a Justice of the Peace, he was the coroner, and he pulled teeth in his barbershop. I could have had the pair of forceps he had, too, but I didn't hang on to them.

There were a great many nice men in Genoa in those days. And some men were really tough. Some of those Raycrafts were plenty tough. My sister married one of the Raycrafts.

There was D. W. Virgin, who was the District Attorney, and, before he was District Attorney, he was the Superintendent of Schools. He used to tour around the valley and visit all the schools. I can recall him coming up to Mottsville, when he always landed on Washington's Birthday to give a talk to the kids; I guess none of us knew what he was talking about, but he was a very famous man. He was a very striking fellow; he was a little,

short fellow, and he had white whiskers clear down to his waist; just as white as snow.

I can recall I said to somebody, "What made his whiskers so white?" And they told me he drank lots of milk! It's funny how some things get impressed in your mind and they stay there.

There's one more I was trying to think of; his name was Joe Sheek, and he had the most wonderful bass voice that you ever heard. He used to go sing in the church—and he had a marvelous voice. I presume he's buried in Genoa.

One of the characters in the valley that was in business here was H. W. Starke, known as "Pop" Starke. His wife was Mama Starke. They were both characters and they were both fine people. They were always trying to do something for the other fellow. When Pop Starke came in here, he had a little hand organ that was his sole possession. He made a living playing the hand organ. Later, he started a bakery here. He went from one thing to another, and then he built what they call the Starke Hotel—a German hotel—and he went along and he done fairly well; but he was a sort of a person that gave more than he received. He died many years ago. He was always known for his hospitality.

He had a great number of mechanical musical instruments and everybody played them. They'd go in and drop a nickel or dime in them. I cannot recall where this one machine went, but it was a museum piece of equipment; it was beautiful. And the noise it made! Everybody thought it was foolish in those days, but today, it's a different thing.

He had many contrivances in his bar, and always some sort of a gadget that would trap people in things. I can recall one time when I hadn't been married very long. My wife and I went in there on a Sunday. It was warm, and

we decided we'd go up and have a glass of beer. There was always some cold meats and everything on the bar there. And there was a book on the bar and it had a label on it, "For Men Only." My wife looked at that and she had to see what it was. When she opened the cover, there was a mechanism in there—it was like a cap pistol. That cap pistol went off, and she threw the thing across the barroom floor. He was always having such stuff as that; always having something to trap somebody. He was quite a notable character.

He was always a great friend of mine; we were very close. In his later years, I helped him on many things, problems that he had. Then he sent for me not too long before he passed away, and wanted me to take care of his things for his daughter and her husband. So I gladly did. I got him to make a will and he left everything to his daughter and her husband.

One of the characters that I knew personally here in the valley was named Chris Yeager. He was an old miner and he was the official hangman for the state of Nevada. They'd always send for him to put the noose around the guy's neck. He had a mine out here in Pinenut, which he'd work occasionally without any success. Then he'd stay in Gardnerville. But when there was an execution coming up—and he'd know before the date—he'd move out to his mine in the Pinenut, and they'd have to come and get him. Of course, he worked it so that the longer he could take from the time they called him to the time he got back, he got that many more days on wages. That went on for many years. I don't think he participated in any of the electrocutions or the gas at the prison, but he did officiate at a good many of the hangings. He was quite an old character here in the valley, and nobody liked him because he was the hangman.



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## POLITICS OF DOUGLAS COUNTY

The politics in Douglas County as far as I can remember was always predominantly Republican. The county seat in early times was in Genoa, Nevada. Going back as far as I can remember, the Raycraft family in Genoa was one of the families that controlled a lot of the politics in Douglas County along with the Brockliss family of Sheridan. They were the two leading factions. When they'd meet at various times, they was like a couple of strange bulldogs. They'd get into fights, but it all came out O.K. The only office holder that was connected with the Raycraft family was D. W. Virgin. He was our District Attorney. He married one of the Raycraft girls. In the Brockliss family, there was a John Brockliss who was the sheriff of this county, and his brother Frank Brockliss was District Attorney for several years. They had their feuds and everything.

The campaigns of course are so entirely different now than it was in those days. Each candidate running for office had quite a task to go round. It was all done by horse and buggy. The candidates would go around and

they invariably would have a box of cigars and a demijohn of whiskey in their rig. They'd go around and give each one of the voters a drink and a cigar, and go on to every ranch. They tried to contact every voter. There was no election cards in those days. Then, just prior to election, they would have the Democratic rallies and the Republican rallies. They would go to Genoa for one night, and they'd be up in Sheridan another night, and then they'd wind up in Gardnerville.

Gardnerville seemed like it was always the finale of the campaigns. They would have piles of cord wood right in the street of Gardnerville for bonfires. They wouldn't have one; they'd have five or six bonfires right up and down the main street of Gardnerville. I don't think there was half a dozen water buckets in town to fight a fire, and no water in the first place, but they never had any fires. Now, if anybody would build a fire in the middle of the street, they'd be put in jail!

They used to have some pretty hot elections in Douglas County. Of course, they couldn't get the returns of the elections like

they can today. They'd have to wait for about a week to get the outside returns. There was voters up at Lake Tahoe, and they voted at Glenbrook. In the later years, they abandoned the voting district at Lake Tahoe, and people had to come down to Genoa to vote until it got rejuvenated at Tahoe; then they had their own elections up there. Then they had a voting place in Jacks Valley, Glenbrook, Hobart, Genoa, Sheridan, Gardnerville, and Buckskin. There were seven voting places in Douglas County at that time; that's in townships. Then later they kept disqualifying them 'til they got down to Glenbrook, Hobart, Jacks Valley went to Genoa, and then Sheridan split up and was actually the Mottsville township instead of Sheridan. Each one of those townships had their constable and justice of the peace and public administrator, which they don't have today. Each one of the places had a sort of a jail. Now, there's only Lake Tahoe, Genoa, Minden, Gardnerville, only four voting places in Douglas County today.

Their campaigns were very spirited in the early days, much more so than they are today. Then, at the finale of all the elections the county and the state would combine. The Democrats and the Republicans would have their last week before election; they'd always have a big time. They'd have the brass bands, and when they'd break up their meetings—especially the state candidates and their backers—they'd go to every saloon in Gardnerville.

I'll never forget when George Springmeyer was running for Attorney General. His father, H. H. Springmeyer, was one of the leading politicians of this county. After they got through talking, they went around (and this I can recall because I seen it—we weren't supposed to be in the saloon, but some of us kids sneaked in there) and he took a handful of \$20 gold pieces and put it on the bar and

told them to drink it up and they all done that. Just lots of money was spent in the saloons.

Fred Dangberg Jr. was the politician of that family. Of course, that came along in the later years of the Dangbergs. He was one of the leading politicians. Bill Dressler had a lot to say in politics in this valley, but that was after the regime of the Brocklisses and the Raycrafts. We haven't any leading factions of politics in this valley today except Democrats and Republicans. As far as any individual leaders are concerned, it seems like they just haven't them anymore.

I was the deputy sheriff and under Mr. Will Park here for a good many years. They never had any deputy sheriff up at Lake Tahoe, so I was appointed deputy sheriff of Lake Tahoe in Douglas County for four months of the year. While I was up there, I guess I got the political bug from being a deputy sheriff, and I decided that I was going to run for Justice of the Peace.

I didn't do very much advertising on it. An old man by the name of C. M. Krummes was in office. He was an old man, and I figured I'd like to have the lob. Of course, in those days, it was nothing to what it is today. During the campaigning, I knew that the people at Lake Tahoe had to come to Genoa to vote. At that time, there was 28 voters at Lake Tahoe. Of course, I knew them all personally, and I was sure of their support. There was a couple up there who was managing the Zephyr Cove property at that time—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wiley. They made a special trip to come down to Genoa to vote for me. Incidentally, I got the entire vote from Tahoe. I got 26 and the Wileys would have made 28. They came down to vote, and found out they weren't registered. They just tore things to pieces; they were registered and they wanted to vote for me. They had forgotten the fact that the election prior to that, they had taken a trip up to the



northwest and voted absentee ballot, and forgot to register. It would up that I won the election by two votes, and it was quite a deal. I didn't know that I was elected until about one o'clock the next day. There was a mix-up in the counting of the votes and it looked like I had lost by one vote, but the result was that I had won the election by two votes.

In those days, the J. P. office was here at Gardner-' ville. They built a jail many years before that, and the office was upstairs and the jail was downstairs. That's where all the J. P. work was done. Then we moved the office to Minden then, and they had a little office in the basement when I went in the fall of 1937. They kept going along and I was out of office for a while, and then got back in. Then they made the new addition to the courthouse, and we moved the office up there.

During the war—World War II—there was so many servicemen getting married. Reno didn't issue licenses after seven in the evening, and Carson City didn't issue any after five. So the cab drivers of Reno just hounded these young fellows coming to get married. One night I can recall that there was six yellow cabs lined up in front of my place for people to get married.

A lot of different things happened at that time that if I'd made notes of it, I could write a book on it and have a book that would be quite interesting. But I didn't do it and it's mostly lost now.

I've had quite a few of the celebrities—so-called Hollywood celebrities—come here to be married. One was Jackie Coogan. They came in here about one in the morning to get married and they had a little car—I think it was a Model A. The girl he married was Flower Perry. They had a young woman with them; she was the daughter of this deadpan actor, Buster Keaton. My wife was the other witness.

I never had anybody in the house that was as repulsive as Jackie Coogan was. I think he was the biggest heel I ever met. They were married, and he was walking out of the door without even a "Thank you" or attempting to pay me until I stopped him. When they got out in their car, he wouldn't let the little girl sit alongside of him; the other, the witness had to sit beside him. Well, there was a story behind it. It was a wedding that had to happen.

I had made an agreement with an Associated Press man in Reno that if ever I got a scoop for him I'd call him. Well, it was two in the morning before I got through with Coogan, and I didn't want to call him at that time, so I decided I'd wait until about seven. Well, they hadn't left the house here a half an hour and the phone started to ring. How it ever got out, I don't know. I was on the phone until six that morning. Every city in the United States was calling me and wanting to know. And the questions these reporters would ask! I finally blew my top with one of them. They wanted to know the color of her dress and what kind of flowers she was wearing and all of that and I blew my top. And then it came out all over the United States in the papers about that wedding. And to think that he was such a person you know, that received that much notoriety.

Well, anyway, the Examiner in those days—their Sunday supplement—used to have the great big, wide pages, and it was quite a volume. They had about four pages about this wedding, showing his picture when they were leaving here (which was wrong) in this little car and both of them smiling and everything. And they referred to me in the Examiner as the "preacher".

I got more letters from all over the United States wanting me to tell them something about this wedding. I never answered any of them, because I just didn't feel that he was the

proper person to get any publicity. Every big city was calling me all the time on that. Then there was one party back east that wrote me. Her father, John Hickey, came out here in the early days and she was just wondering if, by chance, that there was a relationship between us. Well, the John Hickey that was a brother to my father was buried in the old Empire cemetery, so I knew it wasn't him. But she wrote a very nice letter and I answered her. I had so many letters and so many phone calls from all over the United States about marrying that heel; I got so disgusted with him. Now, my goodness, he's a bald-headed man; he looks terrible.

I married several other celebrities. One was Lief Ericson. He was married here; and they was brought from Lake Tahoe by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wiley. I, incidentally, have pictures of that wedding. They stayed together about two months and were divorced—she divorced him and her complaint was that he thought more of his motorcycle than he did of her.

I married the Captain (whose name I can't recall) of the battleship Nevada. He was the captain who took the battleship Nevada over to the Bikini Islands to blow it up with the atomic bomb. When he was telling me about it, he was just about on the verge of tears telling me that he had to bring the old Nevada over there and leave it.

Another celebrity that I married was Peaches Browning. They came in here one day and her mother came along with them. She married a man by the name of Civelli. He was the president of the Emporium of San Francisco. I recall the time that she was in the limelight when she married this man Browning. When she was in here, it was many years after that, and she had sure lost all her peaches before she came here. He was very excited and he left his hat here. That night

we went down to the Minden Inn to some Kiwanis Club doings, my wife and I. My wife went up to him and told him that he left his hat there. He says, "Oh, leave it there; I don't want it—I'm too excited now." So he left his hat there. After a while they were divorced, and he passed away and she passed away, too.

I married another world celebrity. His brother was executed in Yugoslavia, by some of those people. I can't remember his name or anything else, but he told me about his brother and this fellow had escaped from there.

Then, I married Charlie Holton of the movie colonies. He was a little man with a mustache, I saw him in many movies, and he always took the part of a little shyster lawyer. They were very, very nice people, and, looking back, they were about the nicest celebrities that we had here. We've had many, many more nice people than people that were rude to us.

Then there was the time I was going to be killed here. It was a young serviceman during World War II. I was away in Reno that day and they came along in the evening. My wife was with me and her mother was here. She told them I was in Reno and I'd be back. They kept coming back, and going uptown. I got back around ten. Then they came, and she was so drunk that she couldn't sit up. I thought that their intentions were good, but they kept going back and forth and getting drinks, and so I said, "No, I won't marry you." But I said, "You just take her uptown and feed her a lot of coffee and bring her back in an hour. I think she'll be all right and then we'll take care of it."

About that time, they got into an argument, and she dropped her purse and everything went on the floor. We gathered that up and they were still fighting when they went out. Our daughter-in-law was here as one of the witnesses. I called for her to come down and they had a fight while she was there.

They finally went out, and just in a couple of minutes the door flew open—I thought the door was busted to pieces—and here was the young serviceman, a big, husky fellow. He was going to kill me for breaking up his romance. I couldn't handle him, and I told my daughter-in-law to go call the sheriff's office. I went outside. I was going after a gun to protect myself. They must have got wise to something, because they took off across the street, ran to their car and left. They never were married here. Oh, we've had a lot of funny things happen in that room.

There's a lot of people come in here that were celebrities using their right names on licenses that I wouldn't know. There wasn't too many local people that were married here; very few Indians. There was also quite a few colored people married here. I never once had any colored people here that weren't the nicest, cleanest, most well-behaved people there was. Some of them were very, very stylish people; some of them were real black and some of them were kind of half-white.

It used to be years ago that license wouldn't be issued to a white person and one of the black race, like a Filipino, or a Negro; but an Indian and a white could get a license. You'd be surprised to see the wealthy women—white women—come in here with a Filipino or a Negro to try to get married. You'd never see it the other way; you'd never see a white man come in here with a Negro woman. It was always the white women that wanted to marry the black race. Of course, now they can do it.

I did refuse to marry many of them because they were drunk; quite a few of them. There was lots of people who came in here you couldn't say they were drunk; they knew what they were doing and only just having a riot of a time and all that stuff. But for the real drunk ones, I wouldn't do it.

It at times was pitiful to see young kids coming in here and refused a license because they were too young. Then they'd come to me to see if there wasn't some way that I could fix it so they could get married. It was always a case of pregnancy and it was really pitiful to see the shape that some of them were in. They wanted to get married, and even the folks were with them and there was nothing you could do about it. There's only one thing that can be done—they can go to a district judge and the judge can issue a court order to give them the license. When they can see the conditions, they are pretty lenient on that in that respect. You'd be surprised at the number of grown women that's come in here in that condition—they go along for six and eight months, then come in to get married. Matured women—you'd be surprised and just didn't think nothing about it. I felt sorriest for the kids and some of the parents. Why, they were just broken-hearted because it couldn't be done. I guess a good many of them did get fixed up through a district judge.

I married about 16,000 couples in my day so it's pretty hard to remember too much about any of them.

The juvenile problem in my time wasn't so much, but today it's quite prevalent. The Indians were our biggest source of trouble here in the valley. You could put an Indian in jail for 30 days, and if he could get out, he'd be drunk the next day to take another 30 days, as long as he could get something to drink. To an Indian, committing a crime and getting away with it was a credit to him. To think that they'd have to go to jail, it don't bother them; they just didn't have any pride whatsoever about it.



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## INDIANS OF DOUGLAS COUNTY

When I was a very small boy, as far back as I can remember, there was about three Indian tribes here. The first was the Digger Indians who were in California, in Alpine County. In Nevada, in Ormsby County and Washoe County, was the Washo Indians. In Smith Valley and Mason Valley was the Paiute Indians.

Now, the Indians in those days—in the early days— never trespassed on the other Indians' territory. If they did, they'd never come back. That was the tradition of the time. The Indians from Smith Valley would never come into Carson Valley, or vice versa, because they'd never get back to their tribe. They were very strict on that. They just done away with them and nothing was said.

Their habits were quite similar all the time. They didn't depend on any charity or help from anybody, except for working. The squaws, of course, done all the work around the camps. They'd weave baskets and do beadwork and process the skins of the animals that the Indians would get.

As I recall, the Washo Indians from this valley would go over in the fall of the year to Placerville with big wagons, and come back loaded with acorns from the oak trees around Placerville. They brought them back here to make flour. Also, in the fall of the year, where the threshing machines had threshed the grain for the farmers, they would sift the chaff and the grain for days at a time and collect, maybe, ten pounds of wheat a day. Of course, they'd grind that up with the acorns for their flour.

There was many Indian camps in Carson Valley. Several of them had their camps right on the ranches and, of course then the farmers would have the men to help them on the farms. There was an Indian camp in Genoa; there was one at the Van Sickle ranch, which is now the Ted Bacon place; there was one at the Dave Park ranch, at Mottsville; there was another camp up at Sheridan; there was one on the Will Dressler ranch; and one on the Dangberg ranch.

There was an Indian camp very close to the old Mottsville school, on the land that is

now owned by the Melvin Schwake family. None of the Indians in those days ever went to school, but we could see them in activity and they really took care of themselves.

There was no Indian colonies right in the towns or anyplace in those days. The Indians would work on the different farms. They never asked for any aid in those days; they took care of the people when they got old and unable to do anything. They saw that they were fed and clothed, and they asked no charity from anybody.

The pinenut harvest was a big event of the year for the Indians. They would have their tribal dances at different camps and prepare to go out to the pinenut hills for the harvest. They would take the entire families with them. They had long willow poles that they cut to knock the burrs off of the trees—those that were up high. They'd get them. Most of the time they burned the burrs and got the pitch out of them, so that the pinenuts would fall out. And that would be the first part of the harvest. Then, later, the burrs would open up themselves and the Indians gathered the nuts off the ground.

The Indians roasted their own pinenuts in live coals. They put them into some sort of a container and kept throwing them in the air so they wouldn't burn. Then when they would finish the nuts they were all black. Many times, us kids got nuts from the Indians, and our faces would be all black from eating the pinenuts. The crops, 'way back, seemed to be much heavier then they are nowadays.

And there's weather forecast—I don't know where it came from—it was always said that if there was an abundant pinenut crop, that we were to have a hard winter. If it was a small pinenut crop, then it wasn't going to be a hard winter. That didn't always hold true: it was just an Indian superstition.

Late in the fall, the Indians would have rabbit drives. When I was a very small boy, I remember seeing them down in the sagebrush flats. When I was going to Carson and Brunswick with my father, there'd be a line of Indians, three-quarters of a mile long. In those days, they had to use black powder for their guns. You'd be going along and see a puff of smoke, and you'd know that they shot a rabbit. Then, they would take those rabbits after the day and bring them in.

There was a certain way that they would skin those rabbits so that the pelts would dovetail into each other to make the best-looking blankets. That was always the squaw's work. Then, that would be the time that the weather would be cool enough and real chilly that they would hang those rabbits up. They just let them hang up and they'd turn as black as tar. They'd keep them that way for weeks and weeks until they ate them. How they cooked them, I don't know but to see them hanging up by the dozens around the place didn't look very appetizing. Then, the squaws would make these rabbit blankets. It was a work of art, the way they put them together, and sewed them with something.

They also tanned the deer hides and made buckskin—they used to manufacture moccasins and gloves. I had a pair of gloves made by an Indian—real buckskin gloves—and I got sympathetic, I gave them to the ladies of the Methodist church to sell at one of their bazaars. I don't know who got them, but I wish now that I had retained them; they'd be worth a lot to the exhibits of today.

In the springtime at our old ranch, the Indians from the Dave Park camp would come down to our ranch and pick tules. There's two kinds of tules: there's the cattail and another one—I wouldn't know what you would call it; it's like the blade tule. The squaws would pull them out of the stagnant water, and there



would be a portion of six or eight inches that was nice and tender. They wouldn't cut that off until they got back to camp. They'd have a huge pack that looked like it would be enough for a donkey to carry. They would carry them a couple of miles up to their camp and they'd eat them. Us kids used to eat them—go out and pull them when the Indians would be there and sometimes they would taste very good. Now, of course, the Indians of today don't know anything about it.

In the spring, there was a certain kind of willow that when the sap started to come up, the Indians cut these willows. They're real small willows. The Indians took them to camp and stripped the skin off of those willows with a piece of glass. Then when they would work the large end down to the same size as the small end. And that was what they made their baskets of. They knew exactly what kind of a willow and what size they would need for future use. Then they'd get them to the camp and trim them down to the size they wanted, then it didn't make any difference; they could let them dry until they used them. When they started to weave, they would have some water or something, some solution to soften them up. They would dig the roots of certain plants for the dye. It was a permanent dye when it was put in the basket. Those Indians would sit there—those squaws—all day long and just weave those baskets and do the beadwork. Tradition was that the old squaws done all their work sitting down, and that's why they were so broad!

The Indians were also great gamblers.

The women would play cards and the men occasionally would, but the men's game was the hand game. They would never, never tell you what it was or how to play it. I've been around them and I've asked them, and they wouldn't even answer. The squaws would always play their cards on a blanket. Some of

them were heavy gamblers. They really had all kinds of money to gamble with.

When they died, very seldom anybody knew anything about it. They were taken out and buried. They would never have a burial with any white people around. They done it themselves. No markings, or anything. They also would take some beads or something to scatter on the grave or bury with them.

You'd never know where the Indians were buried. There's several burial grounds here in the valley and they did make a cemetery over across the valley on the Foothill Road, but I don't know if they ever used it. When they buried an Indian there, they never let anybody come. If it was wrapped by an undertaker, the undertaker had to drive to the grave and unload the body and then leave, because they didn't want anybody to know anything of what they did. But now, I think that that's entirely crone. They usually are buried from the church at Stewart in a regular fashion.

The burial grounds are on the Dressler place on Round Hill. Then there was one over on the Foothill Road; that's fenced—it's over close to the Ted Bacon ranch. There was one in Genoa, too.

Way back, the Indians didn't have any houses; it was all these wickiups that they had. Wickiups were built of long poles to come to a head, and then they were covered with deerskins and rabbitskins—the rabbitskins were on the inside of their blankets and things, but the outside was mostly deerskins that could stand the weather. There was nothing in there but just piles of rags and things around the edge of the place; there wasn't a chair or anything in the place; they'd always use the ground.

They had a little entrance that you had to get down on your hands and knees to crawl into it. Then it opened up to the big oval, and a hole up in the top to let the smoke out. The

rooms were always so smoky, that that was the reason there was so many blind Indians. The smoke injured their eyes. After a person died in one of those things, nobody'd ever live in it afterwards; they'd burn them down.

The most prominent Indian family in this valley was the Ben James family. They had their camp on the Dressler property. Old Ben James and his wife were really very fine people, but their descendants have proven to be just a nuisance to the valley here, especially now with the younger ones. Ben James was a caretaker up at the Tahoe for a banker from San Francisco; Keller was the fellow's name. Ben James was a real fine man and so was Mrs. James. Of course, she was a real old, typical squaw. Ben was a very brilliant fellow. Whether he went to school or not, I don't know. There's very few of them did, in the early days.

When I was a mere kid; we'd go to many of the Indian dances, and we'd even get in the ring and dance with them. They'd dance all night long. The dances were often held in honor of a girl that was going to get married. They'd go through a lot of motions and do different things which we wouldn't know anything about, but they would dance all night. They'd stand up and hold hands and they'd just jump, just go right around. Then, in the morning they'd have a trench six inches deep worn around in a circle that they danced in.

In those days, it was very rarely that you saw a drunken Indian, because there was so very few of them that could afford to buy liquor. Then, when they did buy liquor, they had to pay a big price to some guy that violated the law. In those days, it was against the law to sell liquor to Indians and that held them down in the drinking. When I was a small boy, I can never recall seeing a drunken Indian woman. I've seen the drunken men, but not very often, at that.

Another thing that I can recall was how they communicated with one another. You could see out in the mountains, fires in different places. I would read those signs of the fires very vividly. That's how they told the different ones what was happening. It took quite a little work to have those fires, because they were large enough to be seen for a good many miles. It was always on a vantage point, where everybody could see it.

I should mention another Indian, Dick Bender. He was around here, and later in Carson City. Dick Bender was quite a famous Indian himself and a very fine man. His descendants are in Carson.

The Indians, in the summertime, were great hay stackers. They could do the best job of any hay stackers in the country and the farmers would always want to get them to stack hay. They'd always get 50¢ or a dollar more a day than the ordinary workers would get.

I could almost talk the Washo language when I was working in a store, in Gardnerville. I could count, too, but I lost the art of that.

This one lady—Indian woman from the Dressler camp—whose name was Edna was a very sedate person. She had always had a beautiful blanket and a handkerchief and her face markings were really handsome. She was a person that didn't get out of line. When she came into the store for her goods, she'd buy one article and pay for it, and then another article. She'd never buy them in a group and pay for it; she wanted to pay for everything as she went along. She was always a very good customer. I could never get her into conversation at all except about what she wanted, and she knew what she wanted.

Another thing that they were great on is those bright-colored silk handkerchiefs. When I was in the store, we'd buy from 25 to 50 dozen of those handkerchiefs at a time. The



Indian women were really particular about what they'd buy. If the one struck their fancy, it didn't make any difference what the price was, that's what they wanted.

We had a few women renegades that would do a lot of stealing, especially with handkerchiefs. They could get a lot of handkerchiefs mussed up and they'd always try and drop them on the floor. Outside of the counters, you wouldn't see it, but they finally stopped that because they were told to stay out of the store. It cured them of that. Some of them were real slickers in shoplifting.

Some of the Indians today are very fine people. One of them is old Clara Frank. She has been a friend of mine for many, many years, and she is honest. And there's Mrs. James, Mrs. Roma James; she's the daughter of Clara Frank, and she is another fine, fine woman.

This Roma James is the son of the Ben James as I was referring to. His descendants are in trouble all the time. They have proven to be one of the worst families in Dresslerville now. The young ones are in trouble continuously, and the Indians are asking for help. We've tried to help them; we've had meetings with them, and we set up things for them. But they'll turn right around and tear the things down. You just can't help them anymore. The little juveniles that they have out there are terrible. It's terrible the way the older ones are handling the thing out there.

You can put an Indian in jail or fine them and it doesn't seem to have any effect; they don't care; there's no effect on them whatsoever. The young kinds are the same way, and then they get out and laugh about it. Putting an Indian in jail doesn't mean anything.

Now they have a system here of putting the men to work under a guard. They have to go out and work for ten or 15 days in an

orange suit that they got to put on, so people can see them and know what they are. They hate them, but they'll stay out a couple days and get drunk, and back in. In other words, an Indian today, in my estimation, is just no good, except the ones that I have mentioned.



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## THE CARSON RIVER MILLS

When I knew Empire and the Carson River Mills, of course, the early boom was over, and the second phase began. The cyanide process was part of the second phase.

There was a great deal of cord wood cut on the west side of the valley, and hauled to Carson City and Virginia City for fuel for homes and businesses. In the early wood drives, the main man in the wood industry was Sam Longabaugh. He used to have a crew of men up in Alpine County, cutting wood and banking alongside the streams. In the spring of the year at the runoff, they would throw all of that wood into the streams and it would float into the main channel of the East Fork of the Carson River and it would come down.

They had what they called a boom up on the Carson River, which was located right close to the abandoned power dam. There was an immense chain across the river there, imbedded into the cliffs on each side. The links in that chain were about 18 inches long and made out of about one and one fourth inches or one and one-half inch iron rods.

It was enormous chain, and had to be very strong to withstand the pressure of the wood against the boom. I have seen pictures (now in the museum of Carson City) where that boom was 30 or 40 feet high in the river and the wood was backed up for several miles.

Then when the flow of the river was just right, they'd break the boom. They had a lock in the middle of it, and when that lock was broken, that would move the wood down the river. They had crews of men in boats that would follow the wood down; and any place that it'd congregate and places where it couldn't get into the mainstream, they would move it out, and get it down the river. It would go down through what was the old Cradlebaugh Bridge. That, at one time, was a toll house built by old Mr. Cradlebaugh.

As the wood floated down, there was some of the wood taken out of the river at Eagle Valley for use in Carson City. The next stop where the wood was taken out was in old Empire at the Morgan Mill. They would take the portion of the wood out of there and they would load that. They would back a wagon

into the stream, and the men would have to stand waist deep or better in water and load the wagon. Then there'd be four or six horses to pull that wagon out. The men would take it up to a flat and pile it up so that it would be dry for consumption in the summer, when the water was low, because all the mills depended on water power for operating.

I recall my father telling the story that the young Irishmen predominated there as workers. They would be working in that chilled water. And on the bank of that place, there was always a 50-gallon drum of whiskey, and a tin cup. When they'd get cold, they'd go out and take a drink of whiskey and then go back to work again. They worked anywhere from eight to ten hours every day. Each mill, going down the river, would take out their allotted amount of cord wood for their own use. There was many mills down the river.

Around 870,000 cords of wood floated down through Carson Valley through the river for consumption. Much of that went to Virginia City, to Silver City, and Dayton. Everything was hauled from the river by teams.

One thing that was amazing to me is the amount of horses and mules that it took to transport all the supplies and all the fuel to Virginia City. They had to transport the hay and grain for all the animals that they had there, so on the return trips they would bring it all back to the mills along the river. It wasn't only the humans that they had to feed, they had to feed the animals besides that. It just took an enormous amount of men and animals to transport that for both the human and the animal existence.

The reduction mills on the Carson River, as I remember them, started in Old Empire. The first mill erected was the Mexican Mill. All the mills down there depended on water power for their machinery until summer, and

then they had to resort to steam power and the fuel was furnished by the wood floated down the Carson River. For the first water power to the Mexican Mill, they went up the river several miles and constructed what they called the Mexican Dam. Then the canal leading the water down to the Mexican Mill was named the Mexican Ditch. That also furnished water power for the Morgan Mill when the water was in abundance. The Mexican Mill was one of the smallest on the Carson River; it had around 15 stamps and employed some 35 or 40 people. In all these mills, they had settling ponds for the tailings which, in time, was put through the cyanide process to recover the values that the mills couldn't catch.

In all these mills, they started out recovery through the amalgamation process. That's the stamps. The ore goes through the stamps into a big amalgamating pan. Quicksilver was put into this pan, and that collected the values—the silver and the gold—as far as it was capable of doing. Then, the balance of that water, after leaving the pan, would flow over what they called the plates. Those plates were coated with quicksilver and after the ore went through there, they were scraped. And what they caught in the pans or had on the plates, which was amalgam, was put together, and processed through the retorting process.

I might explain the process of retorting. It's just like distilling water. The amalgam is put into a big kettle under intense heat. The vapors from that go through coils. The coils are run through water. The quicksilver fumes returns to quicksilver, and it can be used over again. Then, the portion of what is left of the amalgam is put in retorts and melted down to a bar of bullion. Then, the tailings are put in settling ponds. It was quite a process to bring that ore up to where the tailings could be processed. They would have to plow the

ground—they would have huge ponds in this settling, and when it'd get dry enough, they'd have to plow it and harrow it with teams. The elements of the air would separate the values from the tails, and then that would be put through this cyanide plant and further reduced. And then, of course, the tails were dumped out in the river, to be washed down the river.

The Morgan Mill had quite a history. It was first a sawmill. The lumber that it handled was floated down the Carson River from Alpine County in regular tree lengths which were sawed into lumber for Virginia City and hauled up there by teams. Then, it was later changed into a reduction mill. The process in all these mills was the same. The ore was reduced; it went through the amalgamation process and then through the cyanide. At one time, the Morgan Mill was making sulphuric acid, and that acid was hauled in tank wagons by teams to the Mint in Carson City to use as a chemical for minting and clearing up the residue from the gold.

The Morgan Mill was furnished with water through the Mexican Ditch for its water power. Late in the summer and fall, of course, they resorted to steam power. The tailing ponds from the Morgan Mill were across the Carson River.

In those days, it was never referred to as tailings; it was referred to as slum. They had to haul those tailings in one-horse dump carts, across the river to the cars of the V & T, and then it was taken way down to the cyanide plants on the lower Carson River.

There was a man to each cart, and that slum, as we referred to it in those days, was just as white as flour. And the men, the horses, and the carts were just as white as could be. After they worked in that a day, the men looked like they hadn't had a bath in at least ten years.

It was hard work; it was all handwork. Those men were paid a very small wage and they had to work ten hours a day in that. Those cars that the V & T had in those times were very small gondolas. They were nothing like we see a gondola on the railroads of today. It always had a bottom outlet to those cars, so they could dump the cars very rapidly instead of shoveling the slum out.

I'll comment on the situation at the Morgan Mill today. It has always bothered me to think that Ormsby County left one of the most wonderful relics and monuments go to waste there on the Morgan Mill; it was the only bull wheel in existence at any of the mills. They let it go and the junkmen took all the bearings off of it, tipped it over, somebody started it on fire and now there's only the skeleton left. That is one thing that I don't think there's another one in existence in the world. They didn't make any attempt to preserve it, which they could have done and it would have been something worthwhile. Mr. Woodbury operated the Morgan Mill; I can recall the family very well.

Then to go down to the Brunswick Mill. My father's brother worked at the mill there. They also had to build a canal to get the water out of the river to furnish power for the Brunswick Mill, the same as others, while the water was in abundance. Then they resorted to the wood, just like the rest of them did. The Brunswick was a very active place in memory, before and shortly after the turn of the century. They had the big boardinghouse there, which my uncle's family ran. They had other relatives there, living in the Brunswick. They all worked for the Brunswick Mill. There was no town of any kind, it was just the Brunswick—Brunswick is the right way to pronounce that.

Mr. Logan was the superintendent of the Brunswick. He had a beautiful house

there, and there was a nice fish pond, and everything was fixed up in shape. There was a flagpole there, 100 feet high. I can recall that very vividly. That pole was taken down and was put up at the Idlewild Park. in Reno. Now, whether that is still there, I don't know. I have pictures of the Brunswick Mill and the rest of it in its heyday. At the Brunswick, they had a fish pond. Mr. Logan was a very sedate man, and he was always dressed in a frock coat and bow tie. Another boy, Howard Dixon (the Dixon family were born and raised in Brunswick, and Howard is now living in Smith Valley) and I went over to this fish pond and tried to catch the fish. We took this string and put a piece of meat on the end of it and then let the fish swallow it and we pulled them out that way. Mr. Logan got wise to us, and he ran us off of his ground.

In the heyday, they claimed there was 50 trains a day going through those places to Carson City, but as I recall it, there wasn't that many. I know that I have seen at least 20-25 trains going back and forth. That meant ore cars, tailing cars and the general run of that, and also the wood cars.

They had special wood cars for the V & T Railroad that didn't have any side, just a flat car. They'd put the two tiers of wood on there and haul the wood up to Virginia City. Many times the railroad would have excursions and they would use these flatcars. The excursions would only be in the summertime, when the weather was nice. They would use these flatcars and put some railing around the back for a back rest and then just board benches. The people would go wherever they wanted to—to Virginia City or to Carson, Bowers Mansion, or wherever they'd want to.

It took a great deal of wood to furnish the steam for the power plants in those mills. It didn't go into hundreds of cords; it went into thousands of cords of wood a year to keep

those things in operation. Of course, the wood floated down was used by all the families, too.

The next mill down the river, about a mile below the Brunswick, was the Merrimac Mill. The Merrimac Mill was on the opposite side of the river from the railroad, so they had to have big ore bins and chutes to chute that ore across to the mill. The Merrimac Mill, I think, was a 12-stamp-mill, and the same process was used on that as with the other mills.

The next mill down along the river was the Vivian. The railroad was way up on the opposite side of the river, and they had to have chutes several hundred feet long to chute that ore down to the bottom. Then they trammed it across the river to the Vivian Mill. There was a regular little settlement of houses there for all the help and their families. There was even a school at the Vivian Mill.

Of course, it's very hard for anybody to visualize the extent of the buildings there and to see what's there now. There's hardly anything left. To get down to the mills from the railroad side—there was no wagon roads—you had to go down a steep stairway. I imagine it was about 300 feet to the level of the river. Then you had to go across on the bridge to go over to the Vivian Mill. The process in all of the mills was the same; recovering the values from the ore.

The Eureka Mill was the last mill on the river.

It had around twelve stamps. The ore from Virginia City was hauled in there from a spur somewhere near the old Mound House. They hauled all the supplies in and out of there, also. The same process of reduction was at the Eureka that was in the balance of the mills.

The trains would bring the ore from Virginia City to the different mills it was consigned to, and then, on the return they would take the tailings down to the cyanide plant, then go to Virginia City for ore,

then come back again. It was just sort of a run-around deal all the way through. All of the loading of the tailings was done by hand. There was no machinery. They had to shovel the tailings onto the dump carts, and then they would back up to the place there and dump it into the cars. There wasn't any machinery whatever, except the machinery in the mill.

With the tailing cars and everything, there was about 50 men working in the Brunswick area, predominantly Irish. They had the huge dining room there in this boardinghouse. It had a huge cast iron range that, I imagine, was at least 15 feet long. The last time that my sisters worked at the boardinghouse there, that was still in use at that time.

In those places along there, every family had gardens. They could raise the most remarkable vegetables in the country from their small gardens. And that was one way of getting fresh produce. Otherwise, they never had it at all. All of them had a cow for milk supply. Every man worked.

They had a little school at Brunswick; in fact, there was schools in every one of the places there. Empire had several schools there, because the population at Empire was quite high at that time. But every little hamlet there at those mills; each one of them had their own school.

They had put up their own ice for use there and on the river. That's where Carson City's source of ice was for the summertime—the Carson River. Every mill there had their big ice houses that they used for the summer.

There's a story going around about cutting the ice on the river. There was two young Irishmen came over there, and they put them to cutting ice. The only thing they knew about a saw was cutting logs, and one man on each end of it. They sent the Irishmen out to cut some ice on the river and they had a big fight

between themselves to see which one had to go under the ice to hold the other end of the saw!

They just cut an enormous amount of ice there to supply all the needs of their own, Carson City, and Empire. They'd haul all of that ice to Carson City and Empire, then, it would be stored in sawdust.

The town of Empire, which is now only a few houses, at one time supported 5,000 people. In my time, of course, it was way down, but I can recall (when I was a very small chap) the buildings there. I can recall three saloons there, a hotel, and the two stores—one of them was operated by Sam Longabaugh, an important person in Empire. In my recollection, there was two or three schools in Empire, and one church. Most people went to church in Carson City.

I had many relatives in both Brunswick and Empire. Some of them were in business, but the most of them worked in the mills and in the tailing ponds. I knew many of the old celebrities in old Empire there. The Woodburys were the most prominent people of Empire. I think some of their descendants are still living in San Francisco.

Another thing that I wanted to say about Empire was the amount of the Chinese laborers there in the early days. They done all the big jobs—like digging the Mexican Ditch and constructing the V & T Railroad—by hand labor, right when it was most needed. They had their own place; I had pictures of it. I don't think there's anybody else in the country who could point out where the Chinatown was in Empire. There's no remnants or anything left of it.

The Chinese were segregated there in Empire. They were always by themselves, and of course the rest of the whites didn't like them, especially the laboring class. In constructing the V & T Railroad, they had



considerable trouble and they stayed by themselves.

Of course, after Virginia City's ore ran out, all the mills closed down. There's very few of the people from the early days that are still living. The Dan Hickey family moved from Brunswick to Rena, and then from there to San Francisco and they just scattered around. Just recently, Mary Hickey, the nurse who was at Saint Mary's Hospital in Reno for so many years, was buried in Empire with the rest of the family. She's the last one of that family, and there's only two of our family left who were quite active around Empire and Brunswick.



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## CONCLUSION

I have no observations on life; I don't know what they could be. As to my future, right now it's not what I'm going to be; it's what I am. I know that I'm set for the balance in my life in what I want to do, and that is nothing. I've lived long enough now to know that to attempt to accomplish any more would be just foolishness on my part.

There's one thing that I would like to do which I hope I will before very long. That is to get this story together.



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